

## **Smarter Balanced Assessment Transition Webinar**

December 18, 2013

SDE Representatives: Superintendent Luna, Luci Willits, TJ Bliss, Alex Macdonald and Melissa McGrath

### **Superintendent Luna:**

We wanted to take some time and talk with you about the new Smarter Balanced Assessment that we have piloted and are in the process of gearing up for a field test and share with you some of the questions we have heard and give you some information to help answer those. And then leave sufficient time for you to ask questions also.

I just want to start by talking about why we are moving to a different assessment and then I am going to have Luci and TJ and Alex participate in answering a few of the common questions we are hearing. But I want to remind folks that for many, many years we talked about the need to move beyond a multiple choice test. We all recognize that a multiple choice test and a test that is only multiple choice is limited in its ability to properly inform us on how a student is performing academically. We have wanted an accountability system that looks at more than one measure; we have also wanted an assessment that looked at more than just a multiple choice test. Moving to higher standards, the Idaho Core Standards fashioned after the Common Core Standards, and their higher levels of learning and the standards themselves wanting students to demonstrate their ability to analyze and reflect and then explain really necessitates that we have more than a multiple choice test. I heard someone say a while ago that we cannot continue to measure students' writing with a multiple choice test. That's a great way to put it.

So we have been going down this path of developing a better assessment with about 22 other states. One of the things we made clear when we started this process years ago with these other states is that we had to have a test that was better than what currently have and one that we can afford. If we miss the mark on either category then we fail in our goal and our attempt. What I'm here to tell you and what I'm going to explain is that we do have a test that is better than what we had before and one that we can afford. We will talk specifically about that in a moment.

I also want to remind everyone that as we transition to the new standards and a new assessment, we were facing the real possibility this coming spring that we would have to double test our students. Because of federal requirements when it comes to assessment, Idaho and most states were faced with the possibility of giving our ISAT and at the same time field testing the new assessment. We heard loud and clear from you out in the field that we did not want to do double testing, that that was a deal breaker. We carried that message loud and clear back to our meetings with the Secretary and the Secretary's staff. Fortunately, other states joined in and agreed with Idaho, and we were able to successfully move to where we would just do one assessment this spring and that would be the field test this spring, and we would not have to give the ISAT. In so doing, we would freeze our current school accountability Star Rating for an additional year. That was not an easy lift, but we were successful in getting all of those approved through Washington (DC), so that we could have a transition to a new assessment that gives us the ability to field test but not have accountability tied to the field test, for obvious reasons.

With that, I want to move on. First, I am going to have TJ talk to you just about the standards themselves. It's a refresher to help us remember the level these standards are expecting our students to learn at. And then also how we measure how our students are learning at that level. Then, we will go through a series of questions.

**TJ Bliss:**

Good morning everyone. This first slide here about math standards summarizes the level, depth and rigor that the new Idaho Core Standards are requiring of students and teachers.

Students need to be able to balance conceptual understanding – know the what – and then have the procedural fluency – to be able to do. And then to be able to connect these two types of knowledge. We haven't had the balance in our standards. The standards require students to maintain a high cognitive demand throughout their school year and then to be able to communicate reasoning about concepts in math, to reason abstractly and construct viable arguments. These are really, really complex skills that require more complex assessments, assessment that get at deeper levels of knowledge.

The paradigm we are using in developing Smarter Balanced is this idea of Depth of Knowledge because the standards are deeper and require a deeper assessment. There are four levels of deeper knowledge that are analogous to Bloom's Taxonomy as you are probably aware of. But those level 3 and 4 Depth of Knowledge that these standards call for: thinking critically, problem solving, evaluating, synthesizing. It is the same with the ELA standards.

The ELA standards require a complex ability to engage with text, use evidence to inform, argue and analyze, and work collaboratively to understand multiple perspectives. These are the things we need to do. The Smarter Balanced Assessment that Idaho has had an opportunity to be right at the table developing, informing and moving has about 75% of the questions at that level 3 and level 4 Depth of Knowledge because it is actually aligned to the Idaho Core Standards. The ISAT has zero items at the level 4 and less than 10% at the depth of level 3. So really are making a whole shift toward more complex measurement of these skills to make sure our students are meeting these skills. Our teachers are working hard in the classroom to make sure our students are meeting these standards.

I think it's important to remember where we are going with these standards and the need that we have in our state to measure these standards appropriately.

**Superintendent Luna:**

Let's go to a series of questions, these are common questions that we get. Let me just remind you of the timeline that we have for implementing this and transitioning to the actual operational test. We began developing this test a number of years ago. There are 23 states involved in the process. Idaho actually was a co-chair. We have been at the table at the highest levels since Day One. It took us multiple years to get to the point where last year, we actually piloted this assessment in about 120 schools in Idaho. Across the states, there were about 600,000 students that participated in the pilot test, and we were able to learn a lot about logistics, students' interaction with the technology, and the technology that was necessary. From that pilot test, what we learned from that, we moved to the field test that will be next spring.

Also, during this period, we have given schools and teachers and districts access to practice tests so they can start using practice test now this school year so their students can better understand what a Smarter Balanced assessment questions looks like, especially the performance assessments, also getting teachers and educators more comfortable with what an SBAC assessment looks like. Also, definitely it has been valuable for parents to be able to see what this looks like.

So then we moved from this spring where we will do a field test of all students in grades 3-11 and then next year, next Spring 2015 is the first operational test we will have where it will actually be used as part of our accountability system. It is a multiple year phase in. It is a three-year phase in of the assessment itself, but a multiple year phase in to get us to the pilot and then the field test and then the operational test. All along the way, we have provided practice tests, sample items and a number of tools to help make sure we are prepared not just for the field test but the operational test in Spring 2015.

Let me go to some questions now:

**Q: What are we getting with SBAC? I'm going to let TJ walk you through that and the slide that accompanies it.**

TJ: It's important to remember that this is a Smarter *Balanced* Assessment Consortium. We are moving toward a balanced assessment system. Having just a year-end test is not enough in order to know where students are and to influence instruction. From this slide, the Smarter Balanced system includes three main components, only one of which is that end-of-the-year summative test. The other two components are equally if not more important to successful implementation of the Idaho Core Standards. The first one is the Formative Digital Library, which will provide professional development resources to educators to help them improve their ability to do minute-by-minute, daily and weekly assessment of their students in a formative way. To have it influence their instruction and to have students self-assess so they can change their learning. Interim assessments will also be available through the Smarter Balanced Assessment System. Interim Assessments will give districts and schools and even teachers the opportunity to look periodically at where students are.

Luna: TJ, when will those interim assessments be available?

TJ: The interim assessments will be available in Fall 2014. The Formative Digital Library will be available in April of this year (2014) and will continue to be available if Idaho participates in Smarter Balanced Assessment System ongoing.

TJ: So just to summarize, and I think it's important because we don't always recognize, that these types of assessments answer different questions.

- Summative tests answer questions like: what have my students learned? Have they met the standards? How are subgroups performing over time? Is there evidence that our improvement strategies are working? Questions like that that classroom tests just don't answers
- Interim assessments answer questions like: which students are in most need right now? Which students can we help and how can we help them? Is there evidence that our improvement strategies are working toward the end of the year?
- Formative/Daily assessments answer questions like: where are my students in relation to their learning goals in this lesson or unit? What is the gap between my students' current learning and the goal for this lesson? Are there any misconceptions my students have? Are they missing any building blocks?

You can see that all of these questions are important, but they get answered in different ways, by different kinds of data. It's important that all of this type of assessment be aligned to itself as well as to the Core. It is also useful to recognize here that all of these assessments have had heavy involvement by Idaho educators in terms of development. We have about 70 teachers working on the development of the Formative Digital Library in Idaho. They are doing that in conjunction with about 2,000 teachers across the Consortium states. We have educators involved in writing items for the interim and summative tests, about 30 teachers right now involved in that process. And a lot of other people involved in the development of this assessment in Idaho.

**Q: The next natural question is: How Much Does It Cost?**

Luna: That is an area where Idaho has always struggled. The reason we have a multiple choice test is because we are one state dealing with our own contract, own vendor, and we only have 280,000 students and a multiple choice test is cheap. It is the only one we could afford. When you look at expanding to multiple states then you look at a few million students, and you can see how the economy of scale gives us the ability to do more and not spend more than we are currently spending.

It's a fair question: Is there a cost burden, and if so, is it borne by the districts?

Luci: This is a question we get often, and the question is no. Districts will not have to pay out of pocket to administer this test. As Superintendent Luna said, there is power in being part of the Consortium because we have scalability. Idaho is in a unique point because we already do our tests online and a lot of states have never done their tests online; they only do paper-and-pencil. But also, we pay a fair amount for our assessment because we are so small. In terms of Smarter Balanced, we will be getting a better test at a comparable price. Right now, we spend about \$5 million for the ISAT. We will have to do an RFP to select a vendor with the SBAC items, but at this point, all the estimates we have seen is that it will be comparable. We are in a good position that way because districts won't have to pay anything, and the state has always borne the burden of the accountability test through state and federal dollars.

Luna: Luci, go into more detail because I want to make sure it is clear. The price is going to be comparable, but we are getting more than a year-end test like we did through the ISAT.

Luci: Right. Right now, we pay \$5 million and an end-of-the-year test through the ISAT for that. With Smarter Balanced, not only will we get the end-of-the-year test that has more than multiple choice, but other enhanced items and critical thinking-type items, but we are also going to get all the tools along the way. TJ talked about the digital library that will be available to teachers, the interim assessments ... We are getting a very good bang for our buck. We are in a good position. I can tell you from the executive committee calls that a lot of states are grappling with price. They are getting something better, but it is going to cost them more. That is not the case in Idaho.

**Q: How much time will the test take?**

Luna: We have a slide that we can share based on what learned from the pilot.

Luci: If you look at the slide, I want to point some things out. If you look at the top, you see the test type. We used to have three tests; now we have two tests because English language arts are combined. The computer adaptive piece is the first column (CAT). That is the computer part, that is the multiple choice test but also this computer adaptive part will have other items: video enhanced items, constructed response, selected response, technology enhanced. It's not going to be flat. It is not going to be just a,b,c or d. That is going to take about an hour and half or up to two hours for each test. That is something kids are used to doing in Idaho.

Something different about this test is that you can break it up. SBAC would suggest that you break it up into two 45-minute periods. You can start and stop. You can take part of the test one day, 20 minutes one day, and finish it up another day. You can do this over multiple days. So you can give kids breaks. That is not something we had with the ISAT. You had to start and stop at a certain time. That's not the case with SBAC. It's far more flexible and adaptable. It will give you some more options for logistics, and it will help give kids more breaks.

I think it's important to note that this is not 8 hours in one sitting. This is split up over multiple days.

Other than computer adaptive is the performance task. There is a class activity. The class activity is when the teacher is teaching and explaining what is going to be happening. It doesn't have to be in the computer lab. It could be, but it doesn't have to be. Then, you go to the performance task. That is how it breaks up. You can do it over a couple days. The only time it has to be back-to-back is the class activity and the performance task. You have to have those together because the teacher is explaining what is going to happen, giving a short lesson and then students do the performance task. *(Please note for clarification: These must be within a five-day window of each other, but it is strongly recommended that you test the performance task as close to the classroom activity as possible.)* That is very different than what we have had in the past. This is more about critical thinking. They might have to solve a problem, they might have a project. It is far more in-depth and really matches the standards versus what we have had in the past.

To summarize:

- The computer adaptive piece can be broken up over time. You can stop and start.
- We learned a lot in the pilot test. We did hear about it taking longer, and we will learn even more in the field test. We will get a full dress rehearsal.

Luna: When you look at the amount of time a student would spend behind the computer, anywhere from 3.5 hours to 7.5 hours for 11<sup>th</sup> graders. The classroom activity is not part of the test. We have heard concerns from some about a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader being at a computer for 8 hours. That has never even been part of the estimate but it's definitely been something people are concerned about. This is not only important for you to understand, but it's important for your parents and educators to understand.

Luci: The other thing we didn't talk about is that the testing window has been expanded. We heard from districts that since the test will take more time, they will need more time. We have extended it to the maximum of 12 weeks.

TJ: We have extended it on an individual basis. We have told districts that if you feel like you have a need for extended time beyond April 1 to May 16, send me an email ([tjbliss@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:tjbliss@sde.idaho.gov)) and request an extension of the window.

Luci: There is no doubt that this is a longer test. We are interested in how we can accommodate that and what we can do to help you with the logistics. There are some things we have done, but we are interested in hearing more.

Q: Do I have enough computers to take the test?

Alex: Currently, we have got in the tech readiness tool, we have about 52,000 devices statewide. I have looked at the data that is coming through that tool. Of those 52,000, we know that 97% of those devices meet the specs for Smarter Balanced. That is because the minimum specs for Smarter Balanced are at or below what they were for the ISAT. We know we are doing really well there.

There are three main reasons a device isn't meeting the minimum specs:

1. The Operating System is still on Windows XP Service Pack 2. It's a free upgrade to Service Pack 3.
2. The screen resolution of the monitor or device hasn't been set to minimum standards. That could mean a new monitor or an update to the screen resolution.
3. There are devices that don't have the minimum screen size, such as kindles or iPad minis.

We know we are in good shape statewide. You can utilize the tool to see if you have enough. You can use different types of devices. Many of you have used classroom tech funds to buy a mobile lab, or

many of you have implemented a Bring Your Own Device policy. Just remember that now through Smarter Balanced, you are not tied to a computer lab and a tethered PC. You can use laptops and tablets and other devices that meet the minimum specs.

Again, here is the link to the Tech Readiness Tool: [www.techreadiness.net](http://www.techreadiness.net). It was the topic of last month's superintendents' webinar. We also sent a link to the calculator that will allow you the opportunity to see how things look programmatically in rolling this out.

Luna: this is one area we specifically want to know what more we can do to help districts and schools, whether it is analyzing your current capacity. We have a number of online tools where you go on and fill out the information and it does the analysis for you. But I want to know what more we can do. Are we working with the right people in your districts, your tech coordinator and test coordinators? For those of you who have neither, what more can we do at the state level? ... We want to know what more we can do now. One of the things we are field testing is not only the test itself but also the logistics.

TJ: The field test itself is a grand opportunity to figure out some of these things. We cannot figure out all of these things.

**Q: Why is Idaho testing 11<sup>th</sup> grade?**

Luna: First, we want to give students the opportunity to retake the test. And quite frankly, 11<sup>th</sup> grade is the best grade to see if a student is prepared for life after high school. That is why we have chosen the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. That wasn't chosen in a vacuum. There was a lot of input from Idaho educators and stakeholders in that decision. We understand that 11<sup>th</sup> graders also take the SAT that year. We understand that if they are taking AP courses or concurrent credit courses, if they are in an IB program, that there is any number of assessments, those are any number of the logistics we have to consider and make sure we are managing properly.

TJ: In addition, there may be even a more important reason and that is that there is a real value to the students in taking this assessment in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Every public institution of higher education in Idaho as well as most public institutions of higher education in the other 23 states in the Consortium have signed a letter of intent to create a policy that if a student gets an advanced score on Smarter Balanced in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, that student will be exempt from remedial coursework in college. That has huge economic impacts and has huge impacts on students going on and completing college, and it has never happened before. ... This is the first time we have ever worked with higher ed on something like this.

**Q: Why is Idaho field testing all students?**

Luna: This is something we worked through with all school administrators. If we are going to do a dress rehearsal, we needed everyone involved. We want all of our students to be familiar with this test before they take it in Spring 2015 for accountability purposes. We want to learn as much as possible about the logistics of this new exam, the scoring of it, and also we didn't want to double test our students and this is one way to avoid (that). We can meet the federal requirements, and we can do it with one test. ... The only other option was to give the ISAT and still give the SBAC Field Test, so we chose this path. Again, this was in collaboration with a number of school administrators across the state and superintendents at regional meetings and all of us agreeing we did not want to double test and a field test was critical in preparing for the operational test in 2015.

**Open Question-and-Answer Period:**

**Q: Do we still have to take the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Science ISAT along with Smarter Balanced?**

Luci: Yes, that is true. Smarter Balanced does not cover science standards. Idaho has its own science standards. We will have to administer the science ISAT in grades 5, 7 and 10 to meet federal law. We have a contract with DRC to continue that. ... We are working toward end-of-course assessments in science for high school that align more to the standards in high school.

TJ: Yes, we are field testing the end-of-course assessments this spring in biology and chemistry, which will replace the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Science ISAT. This means a student will only take an assessment once they have completed coursework in that area, which has not always been the case with the Science ISAT.

**Q: When will we receive SGP scores for students for the new assessments? 2015 or 2016? If 2016, how does that impact Star Ratings?**

TJ: We are still having conversations about how to calculate growth since we are taking a year off (from scoring data) and transitioning to a new assessment. We have convened a committee of superintendents and principals to discuss the Star Rating System. They have met three times and put forth some recommendations about the Star Rating System, including recommendations about growth. Right now, we need to continue to have conversations about the best route forward for how to calculate growth, when to calculate growth and what is going to be the most fair and feasible path forward there.

**Q: The Idaho Statesman reported that the Executive Director of SBAC said there were no problems or complaints about students keyboarding on the pilot test. What strategies can you suggest that might reduce the anxiety that our elementary teachers might be experiencing about their students' lack of keyboarding skills?**

Luna: This is another reason we are giving the field test. These are things we learn. ... We had a little more than 120 schools participate in the pilot, and our surveys did not indicate a concern of students without keyboarding skills. The whole Consortium where over half a million students took the assessment that was not a concern that was raised. There was a concern about the amount of time it took. We heard that here in Idaho, and we heard that across the Consortium. That is why this Friday I am meeting with a number of superintendents to talk about logistics and the amount of time it takes. I can tell you that a number of districts have told me they are making sure keyboarding is being taught earlier. But again, we did not hear this was a concern among the 120 schools that piloted this. We will learn more from the field test.

Luci: There will not be as much as people think. There is a writing section for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, but other than that, they will be doing things on the computer that they do now: drag and drop, watch videos... It will be far more intuitive for them than it will be for us.

**Q: Are the interim assessments paid for by the state?**

Yes. They will be paid for by the state.

**Q: Is it true that students will need headphones? If so, is there funding available for purchasing them?**

Alex: Yes, students will need headphones. Most (computer) labs that I have been in around the state already have headphones or other listening devices. You have classroom technology funds you can utilize, if that is an issue. *(For further clarification: Students are allowed to bring their own headphones or earbuds and use their own, but the state does not recommend districts ask students to pay for this out of pocket.)*

Luna: these are the things we want to know and learn. If that is a real issue, we want to be part of resolving that issue.

TJ: ISAT remediation funds also are coming out very soon. Those funds could be used for this, too.

**Q: Are the times you shared (for how long it will take a student to take the test the estimated averages? If so, what is the range of time for each test?**

TJ: These times are actually not an average. They are a high range. The vast majority of kids, more than 90%, will finish in that time. Many students finish before that, especially on the performance task in the lower grade. Two hours, for example, is what you should plan on in the lower grades.

**Q: Are there adaptations for the class activity for students in online schools?**

TJ: I don't know if there are adaptations for that. We are having a meeting on January 20 with all of our online and virtual schools here in Boise, and we are going to discuss these issues, what does Smarter Balanced mean for them, what are the logistics? One I have heard from online schools already is: Can we give the classroom activity virtually? The answer is yes. If instruction is done virtually, then yes, that is instruction. Students still have to come to secure testing location to complete the performance task. Look forward to information about that meeting on January 20.

**Q: There has been discussion of the need to hire test proctors. Most schools who did the performance tasks last year understood that the teacher could not administer the performance task and hired a proctor to do it. Is that the protocol?**

TJ: The rules around proctoring are the same for Smarter Balanced as they were for the ISAT. Teachers are not allowed to proctor their own students. That does not mean teachers cannot proctor other students. The in-classroom activity does not need to be done by a hired proctor. It can be done by a teacher. Any testing that is secure, so the computer adaptive portion or the performance task, needs to be proctored by someone other than the students' own teacher.

Luci: Can the students' own teacher do the in-classroom activity for his/her own students before they begin taking the performance task?

TJ: Yes. The teacher can do the in-class activity, and then someone else could proctor the performance task.

**Q: Why does the chart on testing times only list grade 11 for high school but not list grades 9 and 10? What will be the testing times for grades 9 and 10?**

TJ: The testing times for grades 9 and 10 will be the same as grade 11. A complete chart with Grades 9 and 10 is available online here: [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/commonAssessment/docs/Smarter-Balanced-Field-Test-FAQ\\_Idaho.pdf](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/commonAssessment/docs/Smarter-Balanced-Field-Test-FAQ_Idaho.pdf).

Luna: TJ, that begs the question, Why is Idaho choosing to test 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders when other states are not?

Luci: There were two years we chose not to do the 9<sup>th</sup> grade on the ISAT, and we received a lot of pushback because teachers and administrators wanted that data.

**Q: Please clarify the performance task time. I attended a testing meeting that I thought I understand the classroom activity could be done with a week prior to actually taking the student to the lab to take. If I understood Luci, the classroom activity and the computer time for the performance task has to be back to back?**

TJ: The in-class activity does have to come before the performance task, and we recommend that it come as close to the performance task as possible because is information the student will use. If you need some time in between for logistical reasons, there is a window there. Right now, Smarter Balanced is talking about a five-day window. I don't think that is advisable, but it is there should you need that. We strongly recommend it be taken immediately or soon after.



**Q: We would love to get ideas from other high schools regarding scheduling of the test.**

Melissa: Maybe we could work out a way to share among high schools how they are working out the logistics of scheduling.

Luci: Part of this we will work out through the field test, but if you have a good plan, please let us know and we will share it with others.

Luna: After the field test, we will try to find a way to share best practices among schools.

TJ: Region 1 has created an Edmodo site to talk about these issues and share ideas. I would be happy to set up a similar site statewide.

**Q: (comment) There will be a cost to districts through instructional time that is lost to computer labs and human resources spent on proctoring the exam. The cost to administer Smarter Balanced is not comparable.**

Luna: This is why we are field testing so we can learn these things. The ISAT required the same kind of logistics for proctoring and computer time. We have asked for years and years for a better test, and we have heard that a multiple choice test is not accurate.

Luci: I think you have to look at testing time overall. It is less than 1% of a student's total instructional time. We lose instructional time to snow days and to pep assemblies and to a lot of good things. In this case, we believe that the information that will be provided will help student achievement and so we are willing to take the time. Will there be some instructional time lost? Yes, a couple hours? But if we are getting accurate information on how students are doing on these standards then it is worth it.

**Q: Is there a cut-off date for asking for the extension to testing window, and how do you request it?**

TJ: There is not a cut-off date right now, but we will work with the vendor to find out if there is a specific date. If you would like to request an extension, email TJ Bliss at [tjbliss@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:tjbliss@sde.idaho.gov).

**Q: I am concerned about students who are absent on first day of performance task. How will they finish the test or catch up?**

TJ: The primary strategy for that is to have a scheduled make-up, similar to what we did through the ISAT. This is one of the most important things we will find out through the field test: What do you do when a student is absent during the performance task? If they miss the classroom activity and/or the performance task, they will probably have to be moved into a make-up window and receive a new classroom activity and performance task.

**Q: Why are we creating assessments in Schoolnet when similar assessments will be available this fall?**

Alex: TJ and I have been working on this for a few months. This comes down to a licensing and technology issue. We want to get those technology-enhanced items into the platform (Schoolnet). ... We will be working as a team to try and get more Smarter Balanced-type items within Schoolnet itself.

**Q: Is there an estimated time for students taking the science ISAT in grades 5, 7 and 10?**

TJ: Yes, plan about 90 minutes.

**Q: Is there documentation available for which operating systems and minimum specs are required for Smarter Balanced?**

Alex: Yes. Visit <http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/commonAssessment/>.

**Q: Why did the state decide to test all students in grades 3-11 this year and are other states doing this?**

Luna: We were faced with the possibility of double testing to meet federal guidelines. When I met with superintendents and administrators, they made it clear they did not want to double test. We came up with a strategy to petition the US Department of Education to move forward with one test, and it would be the field test. We were successful in getting our plan approved. This is a dress rehearsal, and we want everyone to participate. We don't want some kids to be more familiar than others. As far as testing 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, this is a philosophical decision Idaho made years ago. We do not want a gap. We want that data available to students, teachers and parents. Two other states are field testing all students: South Dakota and Montana.

**Q: Will the science ISAT continue for several years?**

Luna: We are field testing the end-of-course assessments this spring. Based on what we learn from those field tests, it will help inform the transition. It will take State Board action to do that, and there is a cost.

Luci: It is federal law, and we are currently doing the minimum. Until the federal law changes or the state makes a policy change – with the exception of end-of-course assessments – I think we will stay the course.

**Q: Can 11th and 12th grade students retake the ISAT in Fall 2014?**

TJ: Yes.

**Q: What are the considerations for doing re-tests for 12th graders in 2015-16? Will they have the opportunity in the fall or spring? Will scores be available before graduation?**

TJ: The answer is yes, we have included 50% of our 12<sup>th</sup> graders retaking both in the fall and spring of their senior year if they need it. They also will probably be put on an alternate route to graduation.

**Q: At least a portion of teacher evaluations are required to be tied to assessments, but no data will be available this year. Will you be talking to the Legislature about this?**

Luci: The current rule before the Legislature does not require student achievement data be based on the ISAT. It will be a district choice. That only will come into play when we have an operational test.

**Q: What are classroom technology funds?**

Luna: We have money that goes to districts specifically to enhance technology in schools. It is on a formula basis. It is a line item we put in the budget a number of years ago. Your district comes up with a plan, that plan is submitted, half the money is distributed in the beginning of the school year, and the rest is distributed halfway through the school year. Contact Alex Macdonald at [amacdonald@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:amacdonald@sde.idaho.gov) if you have any further questions.

**Q: Do any districts have convincing and compelling arguments related to the need for juniors to take the SAT or the SBAC?**

Luci: The SBAC measures standards, the SAT does not. The SAT serves a different purpose. The SAT does not currently meet federal guidelines. It does not measure the depth of knowledge on standards. It has value, though. The SAT and college entrance exams have been a hurdle to students attending college. I think there are things we can talk about what is required with the college entrance exam. If it is a time issue, maybe we should give the SAT or ACT in the senior year when there is not as much going on with testing. I think you have to recognize they are two different tests, and they have two different purposes.

**Q: What are ISAT Remediation funds?**

Melissa: Those funds have been available to school districts since FY2008. They are sent directly to school districts each year based on the number of students in your district who did not meet proficiency on the ISAT.

TJ: Those funds will be released in the next couple of weeks.

**Q: Why is there no scoring available?**

Luna: This is an opportunity to field test the items to see if they are validated before the test becomes operational. We will not receive individual student information on the field test. But next school year, you will have access to the interim assessments.

**Q: Is the 9th and 10th grade test actually a 9th and 10th grade test or is it an 11th grade test?**

TJ: On the high school assessment, there will be items at all grade levels. It will be adaptive to their level. That is not the case with the ISAT.

**Q: Does the 9th and 10th grade math test reflect an integrated pathway or course specific?**

TJ: This is something we are working on with Smarter Balanced right now. It will be a decision made by the Consortium. Idaho is advocating for both. It will not matter on the field test. Students will receive a random set of items because the goal is test the items, not the student.

**Q: Can the performance task be done before the computer adaptive portion?**

Yes.

**Q: Can you review 95% participation rule? Does this apply to field test? How many questions does a student need to answer to be considered "participation"?**

TJ: Yes. Participation is a federal requirement. The definition of participation for the field test has not been decided yet. In the operational test, the definition will be whatever it takes to get a valid score.

**Q: Does the performance task need to be completed in one sitting?**

TJ: Yes. Unlike the computer adaptive portion, this must be completed at the same time. Think about it like a piano recital. It is a performance, and students will be tested on the entire performance. You cannot break it up.

**Q: Is there a resource available where we can watch a demonstration of what it actually looks like to watch a student go through the performance piece of the SBAC?**

TJ: Yes. On January 28 or before, Smarter Balanced will release 10 webinars, including one that relates to performance tasks where you can watch the process. The Department also plans to host face-to-face meetings with test coordinators where we can discuss this more in person.

**Q: Could you discuss work being done on reports?**

Luci: I serve on the Reporting Committee for Smarter Balanced. We are going to know a lot more in the next 60-90 days. When I do get some things, I would like to run examples by you because I would like to make sure it is what you want. It will be more than the ISAT.

**Q: Will 9th and 10th graders be tested going forward or only on the field test?**

Luci: Idaho's plan is to test 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders each year.

**Q: Is the federal government OK with Idaho administering an adaptive test?**

Luci: Yes. This was a question for Smarter Balanced early on, but we have worked with the US Department of Education on it.